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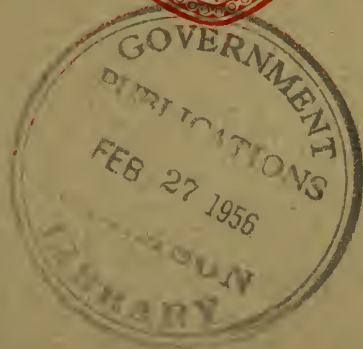
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# James Towne

## IN THE *Words* OF

### *Contemporaries* ♣

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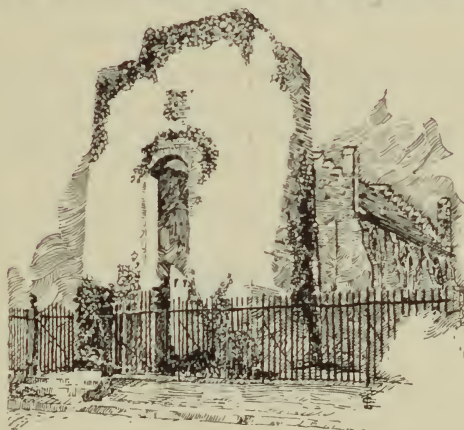


THIS PUBLICATION RELATES TO JAMESTOWN ISLAND, VA.

*A portion of Jamestown Island is included in Colonial National Historical Park and is administered by the National Park Service of the United States Department of the Interior. Jamestown National Historic Site, the other portion of the Island, is administered by the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities.*

*A cooperative agreement between the Association and the Department of the Interior has been in effect since 1940 providing for a unified program of development for the whole Jamestown Island area.*

JAMES TOWNE  
*in the words of*  
CONTEMPORARIES



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*Edited by* EDWARD M. RILEY *and*  
CHARLES E. HATCH, Jr.

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*National Park Service Source Book Series No. 5*  
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
Douglas McKay, *Secretary*,  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, Conrad L. Wirth, *Director*

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## INTRODUCTION

JAMESTOWN today is an island—the site of the first permanent English settlement in America and capital of the colony of Virginia for almost a century, 1607–98. It grew from the first settlement in 1607 into a town and then declined as the plantation system developed, scattering the population of the colony far and wide along the shores of the deep rivers. Jamestown was abandoned as the capital over two centuries ago, with the burning of the fourth statehouse in 1698. All attempts to force its development and to continue it as the chief town in Virginia had failed. Eventually, the town site became farm land and little remained above ground to show later generations that “James Citty” was once the principal town and center of government for Virginia.

This account of Jamestown is not an attempt to present a short history of the town. It is a presentation of excerpts and selections from records, laws, accounts, and descriptions made by men who lived in, or were associated with, “James Towne.” Jamestown was a life and blood development; it was human, normal, and natural, with emergencies that tested the calibre of its men and leaders. Nothing makes this clearer than the documents themselves.

EDWARD M. RILEY

CHARLES E. HATCH, JR.

*Colonial National Historical Park,  
Yorktown, Virginia.  
November 29, 1941.*

## I. THE FIRST LANDING

**T**HE story of Jamestown has its roots in English history, yet for convenience it can be said to have started with the grant of a charter by King James I of England to the Virginia Company of London in the spring of 1606. This charter, carrying rights to settle, explore, and govern limited sections of the New World, made possible the first permanent English settlement in America. The Virginia Company, organized on a joint stock basis, resembled other such colonizing and trading companies of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries that began primarily as profit-making enterprises. Its membership embraced all classes of English society. By the end of 1606 the company had projected and organized an expedition with the purpose of settling in the New World and Captain Christopher Newport, its commander, was ready to sail from London. The history of the voyage and the first landing is quaintly told by Master George Percy as follows:

ON Saturday the twentieth of December in the yeere 1606. the fleet fell from London, and the fift of January we anchored in the Downes: but the winds continued contrarie so long, that we were forced to stay there some time, where wee suffered great stormes, but the skilfulnesse of the Captaine wee suffered no great losse or danger . . .

The three and twentieth day [of March] we fell with the Iland of Mattanenio, in the West Indies. The foure and twentieth day we anchored at Dominico, within fourteene degrees of the Line, a very faire Iland, the Trees full of sweet and good smels; inhabited by many Savage Indians. . . .

The tenth day [of April] we set saile, and disimboged out of the West Indies, and bare oure course Northerly. . . . The six and twentieth day of Aprill, about foure a clocke in the morning, wee descried the Land of Virginia. The same day wee entred into the Bay of Chesupioc directly, without any let or hinderance. There wee landed and discovered a little way, but wee could find nothing worth the speaking of, but faire meddowes and goodly tall Trees, with such Fresh-waters running through the woods, as I was almost ravished at the first sight thereof. . . .

The nine and twentieth day we set up a Crosse at Chesupioc Bay, and named that place Cape Henry. Thirtieth day, we came with our ships to Cape Comfort; where we saw five Savages running on the shoare. . . .

The twelfth day [of May] we went backe to our ships, and discovered a point of Land, called Archers Hope, which was sufficient with a little labour to defend our selves against any Enemy. The soile was good and fruitfull, with excellent good Timber . . . . If it had not beene disliked, because the ship could not ride neere the shoare, we had settled there to all the Collonies contentment.

The thirteenth day, we came to our seating place in Paspigas Countrey, some eight miles from the point of Land, which I made mention before: where our shippes doe lie so neere the shoare that they are moored to the Trees in six fathom water.

The fourteenth day, we landed all our men, which were set to worke about the fortification, and others some to watch and ward as it was convenient. . . .

The fifteenth of June we had built and finished our Fort, which was triangle wise, having three Bulwarkes, at every corner, like a halfe Moone, and foure or five pieces of Artillerie mounted in them. We had made our selves sufficiently strong for these Savages. We had also sowne most of our Corne on two Mountaines. It sprang a mans height from the ground.

*Observations in 1607 BY MASTER GEORGE PERCY.*

## 2. JAMESTOWN ISLAND

**I***N their first act, the choice of a site for settlement, the colonists violated the helpful instructions which they had brought with them from England. These instructions stressed that they select a healthful location which could be defended easily. Jamestown as a point for settlement proved none too desirable, at least from the standpoint of health, as a later observer noted.*

The place, on which the towne is built, is a perfect Peninsula, or tract of land allmost wholly incompast with water. Haveing, on the Sowth side the River (Formerly Powhetan, now called James River) 3 miles brode, incompast on the North, from the East pointe, with a deep creeke, ranging in a cemicircle, to the west, within 10 paces of the River; and there, by a small Istmos, tack'd to the Continent.

This Iseland (for so it is denominate) hath for Longitude (East and West) nere upon two miles, and for Lattitude about halfe so much, beareing in the wholl[e] compass about 5 miles, litle more or less. It is low ground, full of Marches and Swomps, which makes the Aire, especially in the Sumer, insalubritious and un-helthy: It is not at all replenished with springs of fresh water, and that which they have in their wells, brackish, ill sented, penurious, and not gratefull to the stumack; . . .

*Bacon's and Ingram's Proceedings.*

## 3. THE NATIVES

**B***EFORE 1607 the native inhabitants of Virginia had been little affected by contact with the whites, and they were quick to greet the first English settlers to the New World. As later events were to prove, the Indians could be friends, or enemies, and accordingly could*



*render assistance, as they did in the early years of the colony, or destruction, as they did in the massacres of 1622 and 1644. John Smith, who dealt successfully with the natives, has left us an account of them as they appeared while their ways of life were still unmodified by the white man's influence.*

## OF THE NATURAL INHABITANTS OF VIRGINIA

The land is not populous, for the men be fewe; their far greater number is of women and children. Within 60 miles of *James Towne* there are about some 5000 people, but of able men fit for their warres scarce 1500. To nourish so many together they haue yet no means, because they make so smal a benefit of their land, be it never so fertill. . . . The people differ very much in stature, especially in language. . . .

Some being very great as the *Sesquesahamocks*, others very little as the *Wighcocomocos*: but generally tall and straight, of a comely proportion, and of a colour browne when they are of any age, but they are borne white. Their haire is generally black; but few have any beards. The men weare halfe their heads shaven, the other halfe long. . . .

They are inconstant in everie thing, but what feare constraineth them to keepe. Craftie, timerous, quicke of apprehension and very ingenuous. Some are of disposition fearefull, some bold, some cautelous, all *Savage*. Generally covetous of copper, beads, and such like trash. They are soone moved to anger, and so malitious, that they seldome forget an iniury: they seldome steale one from another, least their coniurers should reueale it, and so they be pursued and punished. That they are thus feared is certaine, but that any can reveale their offences by conjuration I am doubtfull. Their women are carefull not to bee suspected of dishonesty without the leave of their husbands.

Each household knoweth their owne lands and gardens, and most live of their owne labours.

*A Map of Virginia With a Description* BY CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH.

## 4. POLITICAL WRANGLINGS

WHILE the natives were at first generally friendly, the colonists encountered many hardships in their new environment. To the disadvantages of an unhealthy location were added the rigors of a new climate and deficient food supply. Conditions would have been difficult even if complete harmony had existed in the little settlement. Such unfortunately was not the case, as can be seen in the ousting of President Wingfield of the Council as told by himself.

By this tyme, the Councell had fully plotted to depose *Wingfeild*, the then President; and had drawne certeyne *Artycles* in wrighting amongst themselves, and toke their oathes upon the Evangelistes to observe them: the effect whereof was, first/

To depose the then President

To make Master *Ratcliff* the next President

Not to depose the one the other

Not to take the deposed President into Councell againe

Not to take Master *Archer* into the Councell, or any other, without the Consent of every one of them. To theis they had subscribed, as out of their owne mouthes, at severall tymes, it was easily gathered/ . . .

Septem.—The 10 of September, Master *Ratcliff*, Master *Smyth*, and Master *Martynn*, came to the Presidentes Tennt with a warrant, subscribed under their handes, to depose the President; sayeing they thought him very unworthy to be eyther President or of the Councell, and therefore discharged him of bothe. . . . I was comytted to a Serieant [Sergeant], and sent to the Pynnassee; but I was answered with, "If they did me wronge, they must answer it/"

*A Discourse of virginia* (1608) BY EDWARD MARIA WINGFIELD.

## 5. EARLY EXPLORATIONS

**W**RANGLINGS among the leaders of the colonists did not block all worth-while accomplishments. Spurred on by the demands of the London Company for profits, Captain Newport, in the fall of 1608, made an expedition up the James River into the Indian country, hoping to find gold and an access to the western sea.

The ships having disburdened her selfe of 70 persons, with the first gentlewoman and woman servant that arrived in our Colony; Captaine Newport with al the Councell, and 120 chosen men, set forward for the discovery of *Monacan*: leaving the President at the fort with 80. (such as they were) to relade the shippe.

Arriving at the falles, we marched by land some forty myles in 2 daies and a halfe; and so returned downe to the same path we went. Two townes wee discovered of the *Monacans*, the people neither using us well nor ill: yet for our securitie wee tooke one of their pettie *Werowances* [chiefs], and lead him bound, to conduct us the way.

And in our returne [we] searched many places wee supposed mynes, about which we spent some time in refining; having one *William Callicut* a refiner, fitted for that purpose. From that crust of earth wee digged, hee perswaded us to beleeve he extracted some smal quantitie of silver (and not unlikely better stuffe might bee had for the digging). With this poore trial, we were contented to leave this faire, fertill, well watred countrie.

*The Proceedings of the English Colonie in Virginia . . . 1606, till this present 1612, . . .*

## 6. SMITH PUTS THE COLONISTS TO WORK

OUT of the internal dissensions there arose a forceful leader in the person of Captain John Smith. Under his strong, yet sometimes harsh, leadership real and necessary projects were completed.

Now we so quietly followed our businesse, that in three moneths [Febr.-April 1609] wee made three or foure Last of Tarre, Pitch, and Sope ashes; produced a tryall of Glasse; made a Well in the Fort of excellent sweet water, which till then was wanting; built some twentie houses; re-covered our Church: provided Nets and W[e]lres for fishing; and to stop the disorders of our disorderly theeuues [thieves], and the Salvages [Savages], built a Blockhouse in the neck of our Isle, kept by a Garrison to entertaine the Salvages trade, and none to passe nor repasse Salvage nor Christian without the presidents order. Thirtie or forty Acres of ground we digged and planted. Of three sowes in eighteene moneths, increased 60 and od Piggs. And neere 500. chickings brought up themselves without having any meat given 'them: but the Hogs were transported to Hog. Isle [Island]: where also we built a block-house with a garison to give us notice of any shipping, and for their exercise they made Clapbord and waynscot, and cut downe trees.

JOHN SMITH, *The Generall Historie of Virginia,  
New-England, and the Summer Isles . . . 1624.*

## 7. "STARVING TIME"

AT Jamestown the settlers now had crude houses, a church, and a palisaded fort. Here there was hope in its season, and then distress. Smith was injured in a gunpowder explosion and in the fall of 1609 returned to England. In the absence of his capable hand, in the winter of 1609-10, hunger and disease almost strangled this the first permanent English settlement in America. Affairs in Virginia reached the lowest ebb. This period, during which nine-tenths of the colonists perished, came to be called the "Starving Time."

Now all of us att James Towne beginneinge to feele that sharp pricke of hunger which noe man trewly descrybe butt he which hath Tasted the bitternesse thereof A worlde of miseries enseed as the Sequell will expresse unto you in so mutche thatt some to satisfye their hunger have robbed the store for the which I caused them to be executed. Then haveinge fedd uponn horses and other beastes as long as they Lasted we weare gladd to make shifte with vermine as doggs Catts Ratts and myce All was fishe thatt came to Nett to satisfye Crewell hunger as to eate Bootes shoes or any other leather some colde [could] Come by And those





*These are the Lines that shew thy Face; but those  
That shew thy Grace and Glory, brighter bee :  
Thy Faire-Discoveries and Fowle-Overthrowes  
Of Salvages, much Civilliz'd by thee  
Best shew thy Spirit; and to it Glory Wynn;  
So, thou art Braſſe without, but Golde within .*

CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH

Smith as shown on his map of New England first published in 1614.  
Original plate in the William L. Clements Library



#### POCAHONTAS

The Indian maid, Pocahontas, through her friendship with Captain John Smith and marriage to John Rolfe, became a real aid to the colony. This illustration is from the Seventeenth-century portrait formerly at Booton Hall, Norfolk, England, and now in the National Gallery of Art, Mellon Collection, Washington, D. C. Reproduced through the courtesy of the National Gallery of Art.



being Spente and devoured some weare inforced to searche the woodes and to feede upon Serpents and snakes and to digge the earthe for wylde and unknowne Rootes where many of our men weare Cutt off of and slayne by the Salvages.

And now famin begininge to Looke gastely and pale in every face thatt notheinge was spared to mainteyne Lyfe and to doe those things wch seame incredible . . .

To eate many [of] our men this starveing Tyme did Runn Away unto the Salvages whome we never heard of after.

*A Trewe Relacyon* BY GEORGE PERCY.

## 8. SIR THOMAS DALE

**F**OLLOWING *this great crisis, and the near abandonment of the colony in June 1610, new life was instilled into the colony in 1611 by the arrival of a new deputy governor, Sir Thomas Dale. Under his direction the existing communal system was abolished and a more stringent code of laws, suitable to the harsh conditions of a savage land, was introduced. Copies of these laws have been preserved, and a selection from them reads:*

There shall no man or woman, Launderer or Launderesse, dare to wash any uncleane Linnen, drive bucks [wash clothes], or throw out the water or suds of fowle cloathes, in the open streete, within the Pallizadoes, or within forty foote of the same, nor rench, and make cleane, any kettle, pot, or pan, or such like vessell within twenty foote of the old well, or new Pumpe: nor shall any one aforesaid, within lesse then a quarter of one mile from the Pallizadoes, dare to doe the necessities of nature, since by these unmanly, slothfull, and loathsome immodesties, the whole Fort may bee choaked, and poisoned with ill aires, and so corrupt (as in all reason cannot but much infect the same) and this shall they take notice of, and avoide, upon paine of whipping and further punishment, as shall be thought meete, by the censure of a martiall Court. . . .

Hee [the governor] shall not suffer in his Garrison any Souldier to enter into Guard, or to bee drawne out into the field without being armed according to the Marshals order, which is, that every shot shall either be furnished with a quilted coate of Canvas, a headpeece, and a sword, or else with a light Armor, and Bases quilted, with which hee shall be furnished: and every Targiteer with his Bases to the small of his legge, and his headpeece, sword and pistoll, or Scuppet provided for that end. And likewise every Officer armed as before, with a firelocke, or Snaphaunse, headpeece, and a Target, onely the Serieant in Garrison shall use his Halbert, and in field his Snaphaunse and Target.

*For the Colony in Virginea Britannia. Lawes  
Divine, Morall and Martial, &c. c. 1610-11.*

## 9. SOME INDUSTRIAL BEGINNINGS

**I**T was expected that Virginia would yield a profit to Company and settlers and a search for profitable ventures was a dominating theme at Jamestown. Early in 1608 "masts [for ships], cedar ["logs"], blacke wallnutt, clapboarde" and "Gould oare [gold ore] . . . which . . . proved dirt" were sent home. With the arrival of the Second Supply in the fall of 1608 effort was renewed with some success and additional proofs were sent home.

Captaine Newport being dispatched with the tryals of pitch, tarre, glasse, frankincense and sope ashes, with that clapboard and wainscot [which] could bee provided, met with Mr. Scrivener at point Comfort, and so returned for England . . .

*Proceedings of the English Colony*

*Many things were attempted. Among them were glassmaking and sericulture.*

. . . the country wants not salsodiack enough to make glasse of, and of which we have made some stoore [store] in a goodly house sett up for the same purpose, with all offices and furnaces thereto belonging, a litle without the island, where James towne stands. . .

*The Historie of Travaile into Virginia  
Britannia* by William Strachey

The silke wormes sent thither from *England*, in seeds the last winter [1614], came forth many of them the beginning of *March*, others in *Aprill*, *Maye* and *June*, thousands of them grown to great bignes, and a spinning, and the rest well thriving of their increase, and commodity well knowne to be reaped by them, we have almost assurance (since sure I am) no Country affordeth more store of *Mulberry* trees, or a kind with whose leafe they more delight, or thrive better.

*A True Discourse of the Present Estate  
of Virginia* by Ralph Hamor

## 10. TOBACCO

**I**T was in tobacco, thanks to the experimental efforts of John Rolfe, that Virginia found an economic basis that made the colony profitable. Tobacco established an economy and directly and indirectly shaped many of the institutions in the colony.

. . . the valuable commoditie of Tobacco of such esteeme in England (if there were nothing else) which every man may plant, and with the least part of his labour, tend and care will returne him both cloathes and other necessities. For the goodnesse whereof, answerable to *west-Indie* *Trinidado* or *Cracus* (admit there

hath no such bin returned) let no man doubt. Into the discourse whereof, since I am obviously entered, I may not forget the gentleman, worthie of such commendations, which first tooke the pains to to make triall thereof, his name Mr John Rolfe, *Anno Domini* 1612, partly for the love he hath a long time borne unto it, and partly to raise commodity to the adventurers, in whose behalfe I witnesse and vouchsafe to holde my testimony in beleefe, that during the time of his aboade there, which draweth neere upon sixe yeeres, no man hath laboured to his power, by good example there and worthy incouragement into England by his letters, then he hath done, witnes his mariage with *Powhatans* daughter [Pocahontas] . . .

*A True Discourse of the Present Estate  
of Virginia* BY RALPH HAMOR.

*By the time of Rolfe's experiments the use of tobacco had not become universal in all quarters. There was some stubborn opposition to its development in Virginia. No one had stronger feeling on the subject than King James I of England. In 1604 he had written:*

And surely in my opinion, there cannot be a more base, and yet hurtfull, corruption in a Countrey, then is the vile use (or other abuse) of taking *Tobacco* in this Kingdome, which hath mooved me, shortly to discover the abuses thereof in this following little Pamphlet.

*The pamphlet to which he referred was his* A COUNTERBLASTE TO TOBACCO, *which ended with a harsh warning:*

Have you not reason then to bee ashamed, and to forbear this filthie noveltie, so basely grounded, so foolishly received and so grossely mistaken in the right use thereof? In your abuse thereof sinning against God, harming your selves both in persons and goods, and making also thereby the markes and notes of vanitie upon you: by the custome thereof making your selves to be wondered at by all forraine civil Nations, and by all strangers that come among you, to be scorned and contemned. A custome lothsome to the eye, hatefull to the Nose, harmefull to the braine, dangerous to the Lungs, and in the blacke stinking fume thereof, neerest resembling the horrible Stigian smoke of the pit that is bottomelesse.

*A Counterblaste to Tobacco* BY KING JAMES I

*Despite royal disapproval, opposition from other quarters, and competition from the regions already producing it, tobacco very soon became the economic cornerstone of Virginia.*

1617 Captaine Hamar . . . In March . . . set saile 1617. and in May he arrived at *James towne* . . . In *James towne* he found . . . the market-place, and streets, and all other spare places planted with Tobacco . . . the Colonie dispersed all about, planting *Tobacco*.

JOHN SMITH, *The Generall Historie of Virginia* . . .



1619 All our riches for the present doe consiste in Tobacco, wherein one man by his owne labour hath in one yeare raised to himselfe to the value of 200*l* [pounds] sterling; and another by the meanes of sixe servants hath cleared at one crop a thousand pound English.      LETTER BY JOHN PORY, 1619.

1623 At the end of theis 4 Yeares there is noe Comoditie but Tobaccoe, . . .  
*An answer to a Declaration of the present state of Virginia.*

1626 We find that nothing hath hindred the proceedings of Artts Manual trades, and staple comodities more then the want of mony amongst us; which makes all men apply themselves to Tobacco, . . . (which is our money) . . .

LETTER FROM THE GOVERNOR AND COUNCIL, MAY 17, 1626.

## II. "JAMES TOWNE," 1614 AND 1616

**A**FTER years of bitter experience, the discovery of a method of curing tobacco furnished Jamestown and Virginia a staple commodity and assured the economic success of the venture. By 1614 the outlook had improved greatly. To the eyes of Ralph Hamor, in that year, at "James Towne," there was progress and even prosperity.

. . . James towne scituate, upon a goodly and fertile Island: which although formerly scandoled with unhealthfull aire, we have since approued as healthfull as any other place in the country: and this I can say by mine own experience, that that corn and gardaine ground (which with much labour beeing when we first seated upon it, a thick wood) wee have cleered, and impaled, is as fertile as any other we have had experience and triall off. The Towne it selfe by the care and providence of Sir *Thomas Gates*, who for the most part had his chieftest residence there, is reduced into a handsome forme, and hath in it two faire rows of howses, all of framed Timber, two stories, and an upper Garret, or Corne loft high, besides three large, and substantiall Storehowses, joyned together in length some hundred and twenty foot, and in breadth forty, and this town hath been lately newly, and strongly impaled, and a faire platforme for Ornance in the west Bulworke raised: there are also without this towne in the Island, some very pleasant, and beutifull howses, two Blockhouses to observe and watch least the Indians at any time should swim over the back river, and come into the Island, and certain other farme howses.

The commaund and government of this towne, hath master *John Scarpe*, Lifenant to Captain *Francis West*, Brother to the right Honourable, the Lord *Lawarre*.

*A True Discourse of the Present Estate of Virginia* BY RALPH HAMOR.

*Two years later, in 1616, John Rolfe wrote of Jamestown and Virginia.*

At *James Towne* . . . are 50 [people] under the commaund of *Leiftenaunte Sharpe*, in the absence of *Captaine Frances West Esquire*, Brother to the right Honorable the *Lord Lawarre* whereof 32 are *Farmors*. All these maintaine themselves with food and raiment. *Mr. Richard Buck* Minister there a verie good Preacher.

[In all Virginia] . . . the number of *Officers* and *Laborers* are 205. The *Farmors* 81 besides 65 woemen and chlldren in every place some, which in all amounteth to 351 persons: a smale number to advaunce so greate a *Worke*.

*A True Relation of the State of  
Virginia* BY JOHN ROLFE

## 12. THE BEGINNINGS OF HOME RULE

IN 1619 a deeply significant event took place at Jamestown. Due largely to the efforts of Sir Edwin Sandys, treasurer of the Virginia Company, the first legislative assembly in America convened in the church at Jamestown in the late summer of that year. This assembly contained the embryo of representative self-government.

The most convenient place we could finde to sitt in was the Quire of the Church Where Sir George Yeardley, the Governor, being sett downe in his accustomed place, those of the Counsel of Estate sate nexte him on both hands excepte onely the Secretary then appointed Speaker, who sate right before him, John Twine, clerke of the General assembly, being placed nexte the Speaker, and Thomas Pierse, the Sergeant, standing at the barre, to be ready for any service the Assembly shoulde comaund him. But forasmuche as men's affaires doe little prosper where God's service is neglected, all the Burgesses tooke their places in the Quire till a prayer was said by Mr. Bucke, the Minister, that it would please God to guide and sanctifie all our proceedings to his owne glory and the good of this Plantation. . . .

*Having convened, the assembly first passed on the eligibility of its members. Then attention was directed toward the "greate Charter, or commission of privileges, orders and laws, sent by Sir George Yeardley out of Englande." After study and debate the assembly passed several petitions, which if allowed, would clarify and supplement these documents as well as bring them in better conformity with conditions in Virginia. From the first the right of self-government was taken seriously.*

The thirde Petition humbly presented by this General Assembly to the Treas-



urer, Counsell and Company is, that it may plainly be expressed in the great Commission (as indeed it is not) that the antient Planters of both sortes, viz., suche as before Sir Thomas Dales' depart were come hither upon their owne chardges, and suche also as were brought hither upon the Companie's coste, maye have their second, third and more divisions successively in as lardge and free manner as any other Planters. Also that they wilbe pleased to allowe to the male children, of them and of all others begotten in Virginia, being the onely hope of a posterity, a single share a piece, and shares for their issues or for themselves, because that in a newe plantation it is not knowen whether man or woman be more necessary. . . .

The fifte Petition is to beseeche the Treasurer, Counsell and Company that, towards the erecting of the University and Colledge, they will sende, when they shall thinke it most convenient, workmen of all sortes, fitt for that purpose.

The sixte and laste is, they wilbe pleased to change the savage name of Kic-cowtan, and to give that Incorporation a new name. . . .

*On August 2 attention was focused on the formulation of laws for the colony. Included among those proposed and enacted were measures looking to the correction of the people, the economic welfare of the community, and the defense of the colony.*

First, in detestation of Idlenes be it enacted, that if any man be founde to live as an Idler or renagate, though a freedman, it shalbe lawful for that Incorporation or Plantation to which he belongeth to appoint him a Mr to serve for wages, till he shewe apparent signes of amendment. . . .

About the plantation of Mulberry trees, be it enacted that every man as he is seattted upon his division, doe for seven yeares together, every yeare plante and maintaine in growte six Mulberry trees at the least, . . .

Be it further ordained by this General Assembly, and we doe by these presents enacte, that all contractes made in England between the owners of the lande and their Tenants and Servantes which they shall sende hither, may be caused to be duely performed, and that the offenders be punished as the Governour and Counsell of Estate shall thinke just and convenient . . .

That no man do sell or give any Indians any piece shott or poulder [powder], or any other armes, offensive or defensive upon paine of being held a Traytour to the Colony, and of being hanged as soon as the facte is proved, without all redemption.

*On August 4, after one last petition, the assembly was prorogued by the Governor. This petition, aiming as it did at the power to veto the company's laws, may easily have alarmed him.*

Their last humble suite is, that the said Counsell and Company would be pleased, so soon as they shall finde it convenient, to make good their promise sett downe at the conclusion of their commission for establishing the Counsel of Estate and the General Assembly, namely, that they will give us power to allowe or disallowe of

their orders of Courte, as his Majesty hath given them power to allowe or to reject our lawes.

*A Reporte of the manner of proceeding in the  
General assembly covented at James City—  
July 30, 31, August 2-4, 1619.*

### 13. A "RED LETTER" YEAR

*The year 1619 was truly a milestone in the development of Virginia. The highlight, of course, was the convening of the Assembly yet there were other events long to be remembered. Provisions were made to stimulate family life when the Company took steps to send "Young maids to make wives for . . . the former Tenants". The first of these were destined to reach Virginia in May and June, 1620. The Company was specific in its motives as the following excerpt from its minutes will show.*

Lastly he [Sir Edwin Sandys] wished that a fitt hundreth might be sent of woemen, Maides young and uncorrupt to make wives to the Inhabitanes and by that meanes to make the men there more settled & lesse moveable who by defect thereof (as is credibly reported) stay there but to gett something and then to returne for England, which will breed a dissolucon, and so an overthrow of the Plantacon. These woemen if they marry to the publiq Farmors, to be transported at the charges of the Company; If otherwise, then those that takes them to wife to pay the said Company their charges of transportacon, and it was never fitter time to send them then nowe.

Minutes of the Virginia Company of London, November, 1619.

*Also in 1619 a number of Negroes arrived in the colony. These were the first Negroes to be brought to Virginia and were the fore-runners of the system of slavery that began to evolve late in the seventeenth century.*

About the latter end of August, a Dutch man of Warr of the burden of a 160 tunes arrived at Point-Comfort, the Comandors name Capt Jope, his Pilott for the West Indies one Mr Marmaduke an Englishman. They mett with the Trer [another ship] in the West Indyes, and determyned to hold consort shipp hetherward, but in their passage lost one the other. He brought not any thing but 20. and odd Negroes, which the Governor and Cape Marchant bought for victualles (Whereof he was in greate need as he pretended) at the best and easiest rates they could. He hadd a lardge and ample comyssion from his Excellency to range and to take purchase in the West Indyes.

A LETTER FROM JOHN ROLFE TO SIR EDWIN SANDYS,  
JANUARY 1620.

## 14. THE MASSACRE OF 1622

THE steady growth of the colony continued until March 1622, when an Indian massacre swept through the outlying settlements. Its force was felt everywhere, even in those sections, Jamestown among them, that the Indians did not reach.

. . . But since our last by the George dated in Januarie 1621 itt hath pleased God for OUR manyfo[ld] sinns to laye a most lamentable Afflictione uppon this Plantacon, by the trecherie of the Indyans, who on the 22TH of march laste, attempted in most places, under the Coulor of unsuspected amytie, in some by Surprize, to have cutt us off all and to have Swept us away at once through owte the whole lande, had it nott plesed god of his abundante mercy to prevent them in many places, for which we can never sufficyently magnifie his blessed name, Butt yet they prevayled soe farr, that they have massacred in all partes above three hundred men women and Children, and have, since nott only spoyled and slaine Divers of our Cattell, and some more of our People, and burnte most of the Howses we have forsaken, but have alsoe enforced us to quitt many of our Plantacons, . . .

A LETTER FROM THE COUNCIL IN VIRGINIA TO THE VIRGINIA  
COMPANY OF LONDON. APRIL, 1622.

*Jamestown was spared the destruction that came to the more outlying sections of the colony because of the loyalty of an Indian that had been befriended by one of the settlers.*

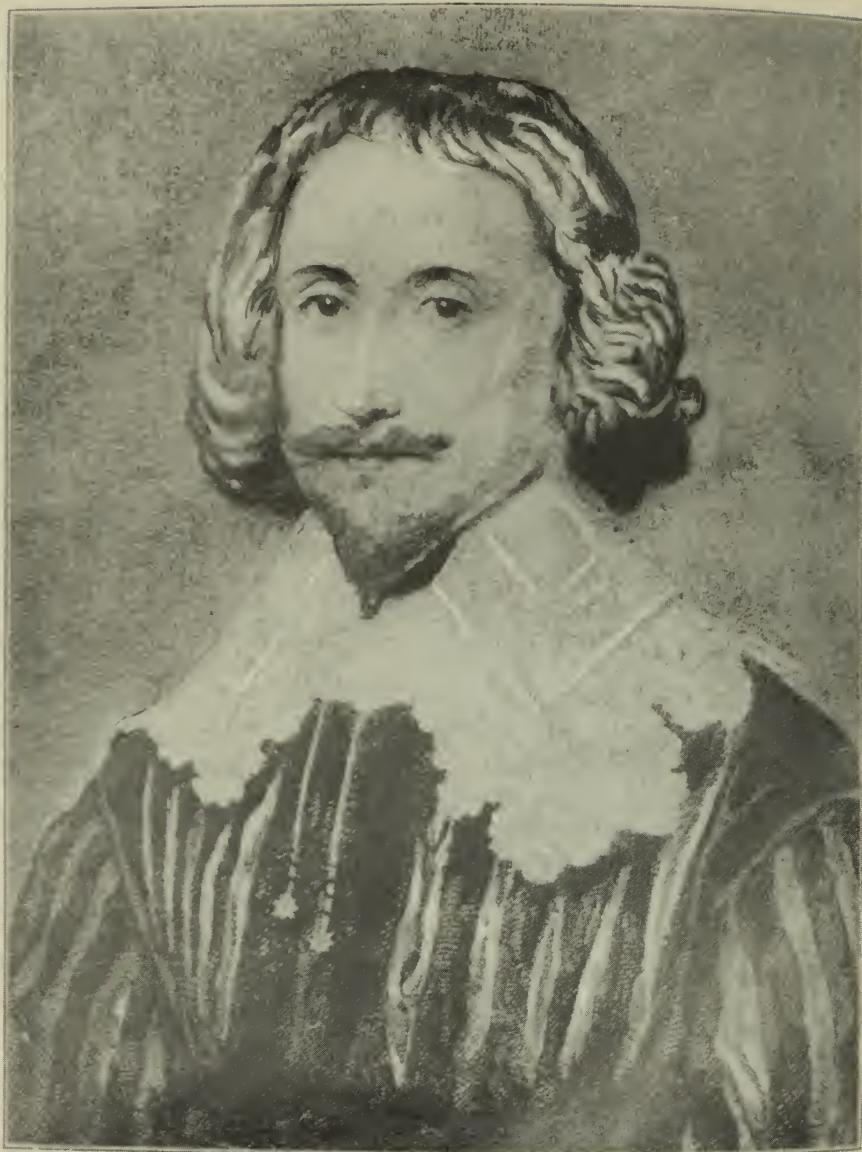
That the slaughter had beene uniuersall, if God had not put it into the heart of an Indian belonging to one *Perry*, to disclose it . . . *Perries* Indian [who living in the house of one *Pace*] rose out of his bed and reveales it to *Pace* that used him as a Sonne . . . *Pace* upon this discouery, securing his house, before day rowed over the River to *James-City* (in that place neere three miles in bredth) and gave notice thereof to the Governor, by which meanes they were prevented there, and at such other Plantations as was possible for a timely intelligence to be giuen; for where they saw us standing upon our Guard, at the sight of a Peece they all ranne away.

EDWARD WATERHOUSE, *A Declaration of the state of the  
Colonie and . . . a Relation of the barbarous Massacre . . .*

## 15. GEORGE SANDYS

IN 1621 the Virginia Company found it necessary to set up a new office—a resident treasurer—in the colony to look after financial matters and to direct and to supervise the development of staple commodities. George Sandys, brother of Sir Edwin Sandys, was named to this post.





GEORGE SANDYS

Portrait of George Sandys, Poet and Resident Treasurer of the Virginia Colony.



The Massacre of 1622 which swept through the outlying settlements but did not reach Jamestown. This representation of the Indian massacre was published in De Bry's *Voyages* in 1634.



And forasmuch as ther hath ben in theise late yeares great fault or defect in nott putting in execucon our orders of court and counsell for the setting upp & upholding those staple Comodities which are necessarie for the subsisting and Encrease of the Plantation which hath happned in part by the our [order] Charging the Governor with toe much buissnes, wee have uppon espetiall approvement of the industry and sufficiency of George Sandis esquire as also for his faithfullnes and plenaire intelligence of our intendments and counsells here (wherunto hee hath from time to tyme bein privie, not only elected and athorised him to bee Treasurer in Virginia, butt also committed to his spetiall and extreordinarie care the execution of all our orders Charters and instructions tending to the setting upp, Encrease and maytaininge of the said Staple Comodities:

VIRGINIA COMPANY—INSTRUCTIONS TO THE GOVERNOR  
AND COUNCIL IN VIRGINIA. JULY 24, 1621.

*George Sandys, a man of much energy, tried his hand at many enterprises while in Virginia, not the least among them being the translation of Ovid's METAMORPHOSES into English poetry. Much of this work he did at Jamestown, where his duties as treasurer and councilor confined him most of the time.*

*The program, which he directed, for the introduction and development of "Staple Comodities" (iron, ship building, silk, glass, etc.) was not rewarded with a high degree of success. Virginia was, as yet, not able to maintain these enterprises, as the report of the glass project indicates.*

The ill successe of the glasse workes is allmost equall unto this [that of the shipwrights]: first the covering of the house, ere fully finished, was blowne downe, by a tempest noe sooner repaired but the Indians came uppon us, which for a while deferd the proceedings. Then they built up the furnace, which after one fortnight that the fire was put in, flew in peeces; yet the wife of one of the Italians (whom I have now sent home, haveinge received many wounds from her husband at severall times, & murder not otherwise to bee prevented, for a more damned crew hell never vomited) reveald in her passion that Vincentio crackt it with a crow of iron: yet dare wee not punish theise desperat fellowes, least the whole dessigne through their stubbornesse should perish. The summer cominge on, Capt: Notron dyed with all saveinge one of his servants, & hee nothinge worth: The Italians fell extremely sicke: yet recoveringe in the beginninge of the winter, I hyred some men for that service, assisted them with mine owne, rebuilt the furnace, ingaged my selfe for provisions for them, & was in a manner a servant unto them. The fier hath now beene six weekes in the furnace, and yett nothinge effected, They complaine that the sand will not run. (though themselves made choise thereof, and likt it then well enough) & now I am sendinge up the river to provide them with better, if it bee to bee had. but I conceive that they would

gladly make the worke to appeare unfeasable, that they might by that meanes be dismissed for England.

A LETTER FROM GEORGE SANDYS TO "MR. FARRER",  
MARCH, 1622/3.

## 16. "NEW TOWNE"

**I**N spite of the failure of premature manufacturing enterprises, Jamestown continued to develop. In 1623 and 1624 a new area was opened in the town. This section, "New Towne," for a time was one of the leading parts of the "Citty." Land grants in the "New Towne," such as that to Ralph Hamor in 1624, give some description of this area.

. . I Sir Francis Wyatt Knight Governor and Capr Generall of Virginia doe with the consent of the Councill of State give and graunt unto Ralph Hamor Esqr and one of the said Councill of State and to his heires and assignes for ever for the better conveniencie and more Comoditie of his howses by him Erected and builded in the New Towne within the precincts of James Citty one acre and a halfe of ground lying and being about his said howse and abutting Southward upon the high way along the banke of the maine river Northward upon the backstreete Eastward upon the high way which parteth it from the ground of Georg Menefey Merchant Westward partly upon the ground of Richard Steephens Merchant and upon the ground alsoe of John Chew Merchant the said ground of one acre and a halfe partly belonging unto his foresaid howse already built & partly unto a howse hereafter to bee built by him in the backstreete . . .

LAND PATENT TO RALPH HAMOR IN 1624

## 17. THE VIRGINIA CENSUS OF 1625

**I**N the winter of 1624/1625 a census was taken for Virginia. This census included population, buildings, provisions, livestock, and armaments. It showed that at "James Cittie," not including the island outside of the town, there were 124 persons (adults, children, servants, and Negroes), 22 houses, 3 stores, and a church. There were provisions of corn, fish, peas, beans, and meal, and 9 boats, one of them a barque of 40 tons. The town could boast of 181 cattle, 1 horse, 209 swine, and 121 goats. Arms and ammunition included 4 pieces of mounted ordnance, 92 small arms, 60 swords, 27 "Armours," 79 coats of mail, and 16 quilted coats. A section from the "James Citty" muster reads:



TILE AND BRICK KILN

In September 1941 this seventeenth century tile and brick kiln was uncovered at Jamestown. In this kiln building materials for the town were made.



SEVENTEENTH CENTURY OBJECTS FOUND AT JAMESTOWN

These articles were found during archeological excavations at Jamestown. Left to right from the upper corner these are: an early wine bottle, graffito slipware pitcher, stoneware mug, plaster ornament, clay pipe, iron key, brass spigot, perfume bottle, glass goblet, silver spoon, bone-handle knife, iron "H" hinge, delftware dish, graffito slipware plate, Dutch fireplace tile, and iron hoe.



James Citty

The Muster of the Inhabitants of James Cittie  
taken the 24<sup>TH</sup> of January 1624 [1625]

The Muster of SR. Francis Wyatt KT &c  
SR Francis Wyatt KT Governor &c. came [to Virginia] in  
the [Ship] George 1621

Servants

Christopher Cooke aged 25 in the George 1621  
Georg Hall aged 13 in the Suply 1620  
Jonathan Giles 21 in the Triall 1619  
John Matheman 19 in the Jonathan 1619  
Jane Davis 24 in the Abigaile 1622

Corne . . . . .	10 barrells
fish . . . . .	4000
Powder . . . . .	20 lbs
Lead and Shott . . . . .	180 lbs
Snaphannce Peecs . . . . .	6
Armours . . . . .	6
Cowes . . . . .	6
Bull . . . . .	1
Yearelings and Calves . . . . .	3
Horse . . . . .	1
breeding Sowes . . . . .	6
Yong Swine . . . . .	14
Dwelling house . . . . .	1
Store . . . . .	1

Belongeing to James Citty

Church . . . . .	1
A Large Court of Guard . . . . .	1
Peecs of Ordnance Mounted . . . . .	4
Quilted Coats . . . . .	16
Coates of Male . . . . .	77
the rest dispersed in the Cunttrie	

The Virginia Census of 1624/1625.

## 18. THE END OF THE VIRGINIA COMPANY

**F**OR a number of years before 1624 there was definite dissatisfaction with the policies and work of the Virginia Company of London. The movement gained momentum in England and in Virginia. This agitation culminated in the revocation of the company charter in 1624. With this Virginia became a royal colony directly under the Crown.



*It was on August 26, 1624, that King James I issued a statement setting forth the dissolution.*

And whereas our Commissioners after much care and paines expended in execucion of our said Commissioners did certifie us that our subjects and people sent to enhabite there and to plant themselves in that Country were most of them by Gods visitacions sicknes of bodie famine and by massacres of them by the native savages of the land dead and deceased and those that were living of them lived in necessitie and want and in danger by the savages but the Country for anie thing that appeared to the said Commissioners to the contr[ar]y they conceived to be fruitfull and healthfull after our people had bin sometye there, And that if industry were used it would produce divers good and staple comodities though in the sixteene yeares government past it had yealded fewe or none, And that this neglecte they conceived must fall on the governors and companie here whoe had power to direct the plantacions . . . But because the said Treasurer and Companie did not submit their charters to be reformed our proceedings therein were stayed for a tyme untill uppon a quo warranto brought and a legall and judicall proceeding therin by due course of laws the said charters were and nowe are and stand avoyded, and because wee were and are still resolved to proceed unto the perfecting of that worke which wee have begunne for the good of the said plantacion by a newe Charter to be made in such manner as shalbe found most fitt and convenient . . .

COMMISSION TO SIR FRANCIS WYATT, GOVERNOR.

AUGUST 26, 1624.

## 19. THE PORT OF JAMESTOWN

**U***NDER the royal government Virginia continued to expand and develop. Jamestown remained the capital, but the life of the colony flowed out into the ever growing tobacco plantations. Economic conditions did not make for the growth of cities, but efforts to foster the development of Jamestown continued. Such was the attempt to center trade there in 1631-32.*

[Enacted by the Assembly:]

That every shipp arivinge in this colony from England, or any other parts, shall, with the first winde and weather, sayle upp to the porte of James Citty and not to unlade any goods or breake any bulke before she shall cast anchor there, uppon payne that the captayne and mayster of the sayd shipp shall forfeite the sayd goods or the value thereof, and shall have and suffer one mounthes imprisonment; . . .

AN ACT OF THE VIRGINIA ASSEMBLY. 1631/32.

## 20. BRICK HOUSES

**I**N spite of expectations, Jamestown was never large and occupied only a section of the west end of the Island. In the town dwelt the Governor, some of the colonial officials, innkeepers, merchants, and citizens. Most of the residents had gardens, usually enclosed by palings, with vegetables, fruits, and vines.

In 1638-1639 however, the Governor held high hopes for the future of the town. Governor Harvey wrote to the English authorities emphasizing the new construction activity that was afoot.

. . . there are twelve houses and stores built in the Towne, one of brick by the Secreatyre, the fairest that ever was knowen in this countrye for substance and uniformitye, by whose example others have undertaken to build framed howses to beautifye the place, consonant to his majesties Instruction that wee should not suffer men to build slight cottages as heretofore.

Such hath bene our Indeavour herein that out of our owne purses wee have Largely contributed to the building of a brick church, and both masters of shippes and others of the ablest Planters have liberally by our persuasion underwritten to this work. A Levye likewyse by his majesties commands is raised for the building of a State howse at James Cittie, and shall with all diligence be performed. Wee beseech your Lordship favour to the Information.

There was not one foote of ground for half a mile together by the Rivers syde in James Towne but was taken up and undertaken to be built before your Lordship order arrived commanding that until stores [storehouses] were built all men should be permitted to Land their goods in such places as should be for their owne conveniencye.

LETTER FROM THE GOVERNOR AND COUNCIL IN  
VIRGINIA TO THE ROYAL AUTHORITIES IN  
ENGLAND. JANUARY 18, 1639.

## 21. GOVERNOR HARVEY DEPOSED

**V**IRGINIANS were quick to develop the will to manage their own affairs. Such was shown at Jamestown when, in 1635, John Harvey, the Royal Governor, was deposed temporarily. Because of his oppressive and tyrannical administration he had won the ill will of the burgesses and councilors who forced him to return to England to face charges lodged against him. Even though the King reappointed him for a time, this deposition is witness that the spirit of independence and initiative was at work in the colony. Samuel Mathews, a leader of the opposition against Harvey, wrote an account of this affair.

I have made bold to present you with divers passages concerning our late governor by the hands of my worthy friend Sir John Zouch. But such was the miserable condition wee lived in that it dayly gives just occasion of new complaints which I doe hereby presume to acquaint you withall, which I beseech you to credit as they are true in every particular. Sir, you may please to take notice that . . . Sir John Harvie . . . [had detained] Letters to his Majestie and Lords and others concerning a contract, . . . They had heard him in open court revile all the councell and tell them they were to give their attendance as assistants onely to advise with him, which if liked of should pass, otherwise the power lay in himselfe to dispose of all matters as his Majesties substitute. Next that he had reduced the colony to a great straight by complying with the Marylanders . . . Sir, these and infinite number of perticular mens injuries, were the grounds of their greife and the occasion of the Petition and Letter that they exhibited to the councell for some speedy redress of these evils which would otherwise ruine the Colony.

The next meeting [of the Council] in a most sterne manner he demanded the reason that wee conceived of the countrey's Petition against him. Mr. Menefee made answer, the chieftest cause was the detayning of the Letters to his Majestie and the Lords. Then he rising in a great rage sayd to Mr. Menefee; and do you say soe? He replied, yes: presently the governor in a fury went and striking him on the shoulder as hard as I can imagine he could said, I arrest you of suspicion of Treason to his Majestie. Then Captain Utie being neare said, and wee the like to you sir. Whereupon I seeing him in a rage, tooke him in my armes and said: Sir, there is no harm intended against you save only to acquaint you with the grievances of the Inhabitants and to that end I desire you to sitt downe in youre chayre . . .

A LETTER WRITTEN BY SAMUAL MATHEWS.

MAY 25, 1635.

*Harvey, himself, has described his deposition.*

That upon pretence of this petition thus by themselves contrived, they caused an Assembly of the Countrey to be called, who mett at James Towne, upon the seaventh day of May last, and there and in severall other places they made Proclamation that if any man could say ought against Sir John Harvey he should be heard. And the said councellors then chose Mr. John West Yor Governor, who thereupon tooke the place and title of Góvernor upon him, and gave orders and directions as Governor.

DECLARATION OF SIR JOHN HARVEY.

## 22. THE CROMWELLIAN COMMONWEALTH

THE Cromwellian wars, the execution of Charles I, and the Commonwealth government in England did not affect Virginia seriously. Even though Virginia remained essentially loyal to the



*Crown and to the Anglican Church, in March 1652 the colony submitted to the authority of the Parliament of England. It was not until 1661 that the royal authority was renewed. In the interim the Governor, as well as the council and other officers, was selected in the colony itself. The articles of surrender reflect the real spirit of the colony's submission to the Commonwealth.*

ARTICLES agreed on and concluded at *James Cittie in Virginia* for the surrendering and settling of that plantation under the obedience and government of the Common Wealth of *England* . . .

It is agreed and consented that the plantation of *Virginia*, and all the inhabitants thereof, shall be and remaine in due obedience and subjection to the common wealth of *England*, according to the lawes there established, And that this submission and subscription bee acknowledged a voluntary act not forced nor constrained by a conquest upon the countrey, And that they shall have and enjoy such freedoms and priviledges as belong to the free borne people of *England*, and that the former government by the commissions and instructions be void and null. . . . that the Grand Assembly as formerly shall convene and transact the affairs of *Virginia*, wherein nothing is to be acted or done contrarie to the government of the common wealth of *England* and the lawes there established.

. . . That there shall be a full and totall remission and indempnitie of all acts, words or writeings done or spoken against the parliament of *England* in relation to the same.

. . . That *Virginia* shall be free from all taxes, customes and impositions whatsoever, and none to be imposed on them without consent of the Grand Assembly, And so that neither Forts nor castles bee erected or garrisons maintained without their consent.

. . . That all goods allreadie brought hither by the *Dutch* or others which are now on shoar shall be free from surprisall.

. . . That neither Governour nor councill shall be obliged to take any oath or engagement to the Common-Wealth of *England* for one whole yeare And that neither Governour nor Councill be censured for praying for or speaking well of the King for one whole yeare in their private houses or neighbouring conference.

. . . That there be sent home at the present Governour's choice to give an accompt to his Majestie of the surrender of his countrey, the present Governour bearing his charges, that is *Sir William Berkeley*.

. . . That all persons that are now in this collonie of what quality or condition soever that have served the King here or in *England* shall be free from all dangers, punishment or mulkt whatsoever, here or elsewhere, and this article as all other articles bee in as cleer termes as the learned in the law of arms can express.

Journal of the House of Burgesses, 1652



## 23. THE TOWN ACT OF 1662

WITH the ascension of Charles II to the throne as King of England, and with the resumption of royal authority in Virginia, renewed efforts were made to maintain James City as the principal town of the colony. Legislative enactments in 1662 were framed with this in mind. Instructions were outlined to guide new and compulsory development in the town.

WHEREAS his sacred majestie by his instructions hath enjoyned us to build a towne, to which though our own conveniencies of profit and securitie might urge us, yett encouraged by his majesties royall commands, to which in dutie wee are all bound to yeild a most readie obedience, this grand assembly takinge into their serious consideration the best meanes of effecting it have in reference thereto enacted.

*First.* That a towne be built at James Citty as being the most convenient place in James River, and already best fitted for the entertainment of workemen that must be employed in the work.

That the towne to be built shall consist of thirty two houses, each house to be built with brick, forty foot long, twenty foot wide, within the walls, to be eighteen foote high above the ground, the walls to be two brick thick to the water table, and a brick and a halfe thick above the water table to the rooffe, the rooffe to be fifteen foote pitch and to be covered with slate or tile.

*2dly. (b)* That the houses shall be all regularly placed one by another in a square or such other forme as the honorable Sir William Berkeley shall appoint most convenient . . . every one building a brick house as aforesaid shall have ground assigned him to build a store on, and shall have the proprietie of the said store and house to him and his heires for ever; and because stores which are built att little cost are likely to produce the greatest benefitt, *it is further enacted* that noe person or persons but such as build houses as aforesaid shall have the priviledges to build stores [storehouses]. . . .

And though in the infancy of this designe it might seem hard to demolish any wooden houses already built in the towne, yett it is hereby *provided and enacted* that noe wooden houses shall hereafter be built within the limitts of the towne, nor those now standing be hereafter repaired, but brick ones to be erected in their steads.

An Act of the Virginia Assembly. December 1662.

## 24. THE TOWN AND ITS GOVERNMENT—1676

DESPITE repeated efforts, Jamestown did not become the metropolis which had been hoped for. This can be seen from the extant descriptions of the town. On the eve of Bacon's Rebellion one writer recorded that:

. . . The Towne is built much about the midle of the Sowth line, close upon the River, extending east and west, about 3 quarters of a mile; in which is comprehended som 16 or 18 houses, most as is the church built of brick, faire and large; and in them about a dozen familes (for all the howses are not inhabited) getting their liveings by keeping ordnaries, at extreordinary rates.

*A Narrative of the Indian and Civil Wars in  
Virginia in the Years 1675 and 1676.*

*In 1676 the assembly established limits for Jamestown and provided for its government.*

[Enacted by the Assembly] . . . that the bounds of James Cittie include the whole island as farr as Sandy Bay, and that from henceforth the burgess or burgesses that shall be hereafter chosen to serve for the said Citty be elected by the majoritie of votes of the housekeepers, freeholders and freemen, as are at the time of such election listed within the bounds aforesaid, and soe liable to pay levies there, . . . and further, that the householders and freeholders have full power, and hereby be authorised, between this and the next assembly to make such good and convenient by laws as they shall think fitt, *provided* that the said by laws intrench not upon the privileges of James City county or any other county in the country.

Act of the Assembly, 1676.

## 25. BACON'S REBELLION

**R**ESSENTMENT against the "closed corporation" government of the Royal Governor, Sir William Berkeley, and the ravages of the Indians on the frontier reached a peak in 1676, when rebellion broke out in Virginia led by Nathaniel Bacon, Junior. Bacon forced the Governor to grant him a commission to fight the Indians, and later, because of high-handed measures on the part of the Governor, he turned against Berkeley. In "The Declaration of the People" Bacon summed up the reasons for his opposition to the Government.

For having upon specious pretences of Publick works raised unjust Taxes upon the Commonalty for the advancement of private Favourits and other sinnister ends but noe visible effects in any measure adequate.

For not having durement the long time of his Government in any measure advanced this hopefull Colony either by Fortifications, Townes or Trade.

For having abused and rendered Contemptible the Majesty of Justice, of advancing to places of judicature scandalous and Ignorant favourits.

For having wronged his MAATIES Prerogative and Interest by assuming the monopoly of the Beaver Trade . . .

For having protected favoured and Imboldened the Indians against his Majestys most Loyall subjects never contriveing requireing or appointing any due or

proper meanes of satisfaction for their many Invasions Murthers and Robberies Committed upon us . . .

For having with only the privacy of some few favourits without acquainting the People, only by the Alteration of a Figure forged a Commission by wee know not what hand, not only without but against the Consent of the People, for raising and effecting of Civill Warrs and distractions, which being happily and, without Bloodshedd prevented . . .

Of these the aforesaid Articles wee accuse Sir William Berkely, as guilty of each and every one of the same, and as one, who hath Traiterously attempted, violated and Injured his Majesties Interest here, by the losse of a great Part of his Colony, and many of his Faithfull and Loyall subjects by him betrayed, and in a barbarous and shamefull manner exposed to the Incursions and murthers of the Heathen.

BY NATHANIEL BACON, JUNIOR. *The Declaration of the People*

*It was not until September 1676 that actual hostilities reached Jamestown. Bacon then advanced against the town as the headquarters of the Governor and his party.*

In the evening Bacon with his Small tired Body of men, his Forlorne marching some distance before, comes into Paspahayes old Fields [across the isthmus from Jamestown Island] and advancing on horseback himselfe on the Sandy Beech before the Towne comands the Trumpet to sound, Fires his carbyne, dismounts, surveys the Ground and orders a French [a trench] worke to be cast up.

All this night is spent in falling of Trees, Cutting of Bushes and throwing up Earth, that by the help of the moone light they had made their French [trench] before day, although they had but two axes and 2 spades in all to performe this work with.

About day-break next morning six of Bacons Soldiers ran up to the Pallasadees of the Towne and Fired briskly upon the Guard, retreating Safely without any damage at first (as is reported) the Governor gave Comand that not a Gun should be fired against Bacon or his party upon paine of death, pretending to be loath to spill bloode and much more to be Beginner of it. . . .

Having planted his great Guns, hee [Bacon] takes the wives and female Relations of such Gentlemen as were in the Governor's Service against him . . . and Places them in the Face of his Enemy, as Bulworkes for their Battery . . .

[Sr. Wm. Berkeley] . . . was at last over persuaded, nay hurried away against his owne Will to Accomack and forced to leave the Towne to the mercy of the enemy . . .

Bacon haveing early Intelligence of the Governor and his Party's Quitting the Towne the night before, enters it without any opposition, and soldier like considering of what importance a Place of the Refuge was, . . . instantly resolves to lay it level with the ground, and the same night he became possessed of it, sett Fire to Towne, church and state house (wherein were the Countryes Records which Drummond had privately convey'd thence and preserved from Burning).

The towne consisted of 12 new brick Houses besides a considerable number of Frame houses with brick chimneys, all which will not be rebuilt (as is computed) for Fifteen hundred pounds of Tobacco.

*A True narrative OF BACON'S REBELLION.*

## 26. JAMESTOWN—IN THE BALANCE

**B**ACON'S *Rebellion came to an end with the death of Nathaniel Bacon, Junior, in October 1676. The movement collapsed due to the lack of leadership, and the royal authority of Berkeley was resumed. Eventually, however, it cost the Governor his post. This Rebellion revealed the trend of Virginia history in the late seventeenth century, and constituted a precedent for opposition to unpopular and oppressive government.*

*Bacon's destruction of Jamestown in September 1676 was quite complete and it prompted the House of Burgesses to consider moving the capital to a new location.*

*It is hereby ordered, that whereas the state house being now Burnt downe by . . . Nathaniel Bacon the younger, and allso the houses in James City And for as much as Tyndalls [Gloucester] poynte is supposed and accompted, to bee the most Convenient place for the Accomodation of the Country, in general to meet att, that therefore the state house for the time to Come, Bee Built att Tindalls poynte.*

*Journal of the House of Burgesses, 1676.*

## 27. THE LAST STATEHOUSE

**T**HE *recommendation to move the capital, as was the case with earlier proposals of a similar nature, was not accepted. Later, royal instructions provided for the rebuilding of Jamestown. Eventually, normal functions were resumed and a statehouse—the last for Jamestown—was erected.*

[December 4, 1685]

*By the House of Burgesses.*

*Ordered*

That MR Auditor Bacon [Nathaniel Bacon, Senior] pay to Col Phillip Ludwell fouer hundred pounds *Sterl* out of the moneys accruing from the duty of three pence per gallon upon liquors, for and in consideration of rebuilding the state house,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The foundations of this structure are visible at Jamestown today.



upon payment of which money Mr *Auditor* is desired to take bond from Col. *Ludwel* for the full compleating of the said house, in such manner, as shall be fully satisfactory to his Excellency, the Councel and the house of Burgesses, answerably good and equivalent to the condition for the same.

His Excellencies and the Councels concurrence here is desired by the house

*Test Robert Beverley Clerk Assembly*

*Resolved* by the house, that the room in the state house, called the Porch Chamber be kept and appropriated an office for the Clerk of the Assembly and that *Robert Beverley* the present Clerk take possession thereof and therein lodge and place all Records, Books and Papers belonging to the Assembly, which either now are or for the time to come shall be committed to his charge, keeping or custody.

*Ordered* that this resolve of the house be sent to his Excellency & the Councel with the requests of his house for their concurrence therein.

*Proposed* by the house, that the lower room in the state house opposite to the Court house room be with all possible expedition fitted for the secretaries office in such manner, as his Excellency and the Councel shal direct, and this House doe pray his Excellency will please to Command and direct the doing thereof, and that the Honorable Col *Ludwel* be treated with about it.

*Legislative Journals of the Council of  
Colonial Virginia*

## 28. JAMESTOWN ABANDONED AS THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT

*In October, 1698 a disastrous fire destroyed the statehouse at Jamestown. Thus, as had been the case when three earlier statehouses burned, it was necessary to rent space in private homes and elsewhere for the Assembly session in 1699. It was at this session, on May 18, that the House of Burgesses initiated action that led to the removal of the seat of government from Jamestown where it had been for 92 years.*

The House (according to the Order of the day) Resolved itself into a Committee of the whole House to take into further Consideration and Debate the matters referred to this Day relateing to the Building a State House, and Mr. *Cary* took the Chaire and after some time spent therein Mr. *Speaker* resumed the Chaire and Mr. *Cary* reported from the said Committee That they had come to a Resolution therein which he read in his place and afterwards delivered in at the Table where the same were read as followeth

This Committee having maturely considered and fully debated the matters to them referred relateing to the place for Erecting and building a State house after the nomination of Several places.



OLD CHURCH TOWER

*Resolved* That the said State house be built at the Middle Plantation.

*Ordered* That Mr. Custis, Mr. Bassett, Mr. Robinson & Mr. Talliaferro do forthwith wait upon the Council and acquaint them that the House have had in Debate and under their Consideration the place for building a State house, and have resolved that the said Statehouse be built at the Middle Plantation to which the House desires their Honors Concurrence.

*Journals of the House of Burgess*

*Soon the various agencies of the Government, together with the records, were being moved to the new capital in Williamsburg only six miles from Jamestown.*

[December 17, 1700.]

*Resolved*, [by the House of Burgesses]

That the Records of this Government, which stil remaine at James City, be, with all Convenient Expedition, removed from thence to the place Appointed for Keeping the Secretary's office in his Majesties Royal Colledge of William and Mary, Adjacent to the City of Williamsburgh, according to the petition of Edmund Jennings, Esquire, Deputy Secretary, made to his Excellency and the honorable Council in that respect.

*Resolved*,

That the Records and papers belonging to this house and now lodged at James City, be, with all Convenient Expedition, removed from thence and placed in the Chamber appointed for the Clerk of this house in his Majesties Royal Colledge of William & Mary, adjacent to the city of Williamsburg.

*Ordered*,

That a Message be sent to the Councill to desire their Concurrence to the Resolves of this house, touching the removal of the Records belonging to the Secretary's office and to this house. . . . His Excellency & his Majesties honorable Council concurr [December 18] with the house of Burgesses in the above Resolves.

*Calendar of Virginia State Papers.*

## 29. JAMESTOWN DECLINES

JAMESTOWN, capital and leading town in Virginia since 1607, had now lost its place in the affairs of the colony. Virginia was a growing, prosperous region. The opening of the interior, the seating of better town sites, local conditions at Jamestown, the search for new land, and the development of tobacco plantations with a localized trade system all played a part in the decline. After a century of service the life of Jamestown ebbed out to other areas.

*Following the departure of the Government in 1700, decline was swift. Many residents forsook the town and business began to disappear. Hugh Jones, describing the "Present State of Virginia," in the early part of the eighteenth century, presented a picture of Jamestown in decline.*

THE first *Metropolis*, *James Town*, was built in the most convenient Place for Trade and Security against the *Indians*, but often received much Damage, being twice burnt down; after which it never recovered its Perfection, consisting at present of nothing but Abundance of Brick Rubbish, and three or four good inhabited Houses, tho' the Parish is of pretty large Extent, but less than others. When the *State House* and *Prison* were burnt down, *Governor Nicholson* removed the Residence of the *Governor*, with the Meeting of *General Courts* and *General Assemblies* to *Middle Plantation*, seven Miles from *James Town*, in a healthier and more convenient Place, and freer from the Annoyance of *Muskettoes*.

*Present State of Virginia* BY HUGH JONES.

*Some fifty years later, at the time of the American Revolution, Jamestown had ceased altogether to function as a town. Even the isthmus that had connected it with the mainland was now fully broken. Lord Cornwallis, en route to Portsmouth and then to Yorktown, in July 1781, forded into the Island. Two months later came French troops en route to join Washington's allied army for its climatic assault on the British at Yorktown. One of these French soldiers, Chevalier D'Anceville, wrote graphically of the shambles that marked the physical end of the town of Jamestown.*

The enemy [the British] a short time before had quitted this post and had left there ineffacable vestiges of his presence. This little town, one of the oldest in America, had been destroyed for the most part. One finds there ruins, the debris of conflagrations, tombs overturned, other fine monuments broken, [and] a church partly thrown down . . .

"Journal of the Chesapeake Campaign"



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<sup>1</sup> Sixteen-page booklet published by advisory Board, San Jose Mission National Historic Site, San Antonio, Tex.

<sup>2</sup> In non-Federal ownership, having agreements with National Park Service for cooperative preservation and use.

<sup>3</sup> A historical handbook relating to this area is for sale by the Superintendent of Documents, Washington 25, D. C., at 20 cents a copy.

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*"Lastly and chiefly the way to prosper and achieve good success is to make yourselves all of one mind for the good of your Country and your own, and to serve and fear God the Giver of all Goodness, for every plantation which our Heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted out."*

FROM: "INSTRUCTIONS GIVEN BY WAY OF  
ADVICE . . . FOR THE INTENDED  
VOYAGE TO VIRGINIA" [1606]

